

What is claimed is:

1. A method involving collection of taxes related to sales of goods and/or services, comprising:

providing a control system including at least a first distributed tax gateway;

5 establishing relationships involving a plurality of merchant computers, including at least a first merchant computer, and said control system, said first merchant computer being associated with a first merchant having a first merchant account at a first merchant bank with a first merchant bank computer;

10 establishing relationships involving a plurality of tax authority designated computers, including at least a first tax authority designated computer, and said control system, said first tax authority designated computer being associated with a first tax authority, said first merchant computer being located at a first merchant site and said first tax authority designated computer being located at a first tax authority designated site, with said first distributed tax gateway being located at a first distributed tax gateway site different from each of said first merchant site and said first tax authority designated site;

15 determining a first tax amount related to a first sales transaction involving said first merchant computer;

debiting said first merchant account in at least said first tax amount using said first merchant bank computer and said control system;

20 crediting said first tax authority designated account in at least said first tax amount using said first tax authority designated computer and under control of said control system using predetermined requirements related to a manner of crediting said first tax authority account.

2. A method, as claimed in Claim 1, wherein:

25 said determining step includes receiving by said first merchant computer purchase inputs using a first consumer computer and a first communications network that enables communications between said first consumer computer and said first merchant computer.

3. A method, as claimed in Claim 2, wherein:

said determining step includes communicating first sales information related to said first sales transaction to said first distributed tax gateway using said first merchant computer.

30 4. A method, as claimed in Claim 3, wherein:

said determining step includes processing said first sales information using said first distributed tax gateway to ascertain said first tax amount.

5. A method, as claimed in Claim 3, wherein:

35 said determining step includes invoking a tax calculation agent stored with said first merchant computer.

generating a report using said main tax gateway related to said first tax amount; and transmitting said report to said first tax authority.

said control system includes a main tax gateway and said step of establishing relationships involving said control system and said plurality of merchant computers includes registering said first merchant using said main tax gateway and said step of establishing relationships involving said control system and said plurality of tax authority designated computers includes registering said first tax authority using said main tax gateway by providing identification information of said first tax authority to said main tax gateway.

said step of registering said first merchant includes obtaining a digital certification associated with said first merchant and said step of registering said first tax authority includes obtaining a digital certification associated with said first tax authority.

said step of registering said first merchant includes validating said first merchant to ensure accuracy of information provided by said first merchant to said main tax gateway, said validating step including checking credit of said first merchant.

~~said step of registering said first tax authority includes validating said first tax authority utilizing information provided by said first tax authority to ensure that said first tax authority is a proper tax authority.~~

said tax collection agent is downloaded to said first merchant computer using said control system.

12. In a system involved with the collection of taxes related to sales of goods and/or services that includes a plurality of customer computers including a first customer computer, a plurality of merchant computers including a first merchant computer associated with a first merchant having a first merchant account, a plurality of merchant bank computers including a first merchant bank computer, a plurality of tax authority designated computers including a first tax authority designated computer associated with a first tax authority having a first tax authority account, and one or more communication networks for enabling communications among the customer computers and the merchant computers and for enabling communications among the merchant computers and the merchant bank computers,

a control system that performs the following functions and/or operations:

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communicates with each of the plurality of merchant computers using the one or more communication networks;

communicates with each of the plurality of merchant bank computers using the one or more communication networks;

communicates with each of the plurality of tax authority designated computers using the one or more communication networks;

stores debit information related to authorized debits obtained from each of the plurality of merchant banks;

stores credit information related to providing credits to each of the plurality of tax authority designated computers;

stores merchant information related to each of the plurality of merchants including identities of the merchants;

stores tax authority information related to each of the plurality of tax authorities including identities of the tax authorities;

receives transaction information from the plurality of merchant computers including first transaction information from the first merchant computer at substantially the same time said first transaction is conducted;

debits at least the first merchant bank computer in a first tax amount related to said first transaction information;

credits said first tax amount to the first tax authority designated computer; and

provides generated reports to the tax authorities associated with the plurality of tax authority designated computers.

13. In a system, as claimed in Claim 12, wherein:

said control system includes a main tax gateway and at least a first distributed tax gateway in communication therewith, said main tax gateway including a processing/controlling subsystem and a memory subsystem in communication with said processing/controlling subsystem, said memory subsystem storing said debit information, storing said credit information, storing said merchant information and storing said tax authority information.

14. In a system, as claimed in Claim 13, wherein:

said processing/controlling subsystem being used in debiting the first merchant bank computer in the first tax amount and being used in crediting the first tax amount to the first tax authority designated computer, said processing/controlling subsystem also being used in providing said generated reports to the tax authorities.

15. In a system, as claimed in Claim 13, wherein:

said first distributed tax gateway is used in receiving said first transaction information.

16. In a system, as claimed in Claim 13, wherein:
 said first distributed tax gateway includes a first distributed processing/controlling subsystem and in which at least one of said first distributed processing/controlling subsystem and the first merchant computer calculates said first tax amount using a tax collection agent.

17. In a system, as claimed in Claim 12, wherein:
 the one or more communication networks includes the Internet.

18. In a system, as claimed in Claim 13, wherein:
 said main tax gateway memory subsystem stores first merchant certification information related to certifying communications as being received from the first merchant computer and stores first tax authority certification information related to certifying communications as being received from the first tax authority designated computer.

19. In a system, as claimed in Claim 13, wherein:
 said main tax gateway memory subsystem stores first merchant validating information related to validating the identification of the first merchant and stores the authority validating information related to validating the identity of the first tax authority.

20. In a system, as claimed in Claim 13, wherein:
 said main tax gateway memory subsystem stores information related to requirements as to when the plurality of tax designated computers are to be credited with said first tax amount and stores information related to correlating the identity of the first merchant with the identity of the first merchant bank.

21. In a system, as claimed in Claim 13, further including:
 a plurality of distributed tax gateways different from said first distributed tax gateway and with said plurality of distributed tax gateways and said first distributed tax gateway in communication with said main tax gateway.

22. A network taxation system for supporting the collection of taxes and/or obtaining tax information and which can communicate with at least a first merchant node and a first merchant bank node, comprising:

a tax system that stores at least one of tax determining information and tax amount information;

a merchant enrollment system that registers a plurality of merchants including at least a first merchant associated with said first merchant node;

a merchant interaction control system that communicates with said merchant enrollment system and communicates with said first merchant node to receive said at least one of said tax determining information and said tax amount information; and

a bank interface that communicates with said tax system to enable communications with said first merchant bank node related to said tax amount information.

23. A system, as claimed in Claim 22, further including:
a merchant address checking system that verifies an address of a first merchant associated with said first merchant node.

24. A system, as claimed in Claim 22, wherein:
said tax amount information includes first tax amounts and said tax system includes a tax computing engine that receives said tax determining information and computes said first tax amounts using said tax determining information that is received from said first merchant node.

25. A system, as claimed in Claim 22, wherein:
said tax amount information includes second tax amounts and further including a tax determination module that is provided to a first merchant associated with said first merchant node and is used to determine said second tax amounts.

26. A system, as claimed in Claim 25, wherein:
said tax computation module is downloaded using said first merchant node.

27. A system, as claimed in Claim 22, wherein:
said merchant interaction control system, said merchant enrollment system, and said tax system are included with at least one of a main controller and a first gateway controller

28. A system, as claimed in Claim 27, wherein:
said network transaction system includes each of said main controller and said first gateway controller and said main controller oversees operations of said first gateway controller, receives said tax amount information provided by said first gateway controller and at least one of said main controller and said first gateway controller initiates transfers of tax monies associated with said tax amount information using said first merchant bank node.

29. A system, as claimed in Claim 22, wherein:
said merchant enrollment system is involved with receiving business rule merchant information related to conducting of business by a first merchant associated with said first merchant node.

30. A system, as claimed in Claim 22, further including:
a tax authority system in operative communication with said tax system and being involved with communications with a plurality of tax authorities including a first tax authority associated with a first tax authority node.

31. A system, as claimed in Claim 30, wherein:
said taxing authority system includes a tax authority enrollment system to enroll a plurality of tax authorities with said network taxation system and a tax authority interaction control system to enable communications with at least said first tax authority node.

32. A system, as claimed in Claim 31, wherein:

said taxing authority system includes a tax authority permission system that makes determinations related to allowing the plurality of tax authorities to use said network taxation system.

33. A system, as claimed in Claim 22, wherein:

said tax system includes a tax transactions database and management system for handling at least one of said tax determining information and said tax amount information.

34. A method involving tax information and/or taxes, comprising:

providing a network taxation system and at least a first merchant node, said network taxation system for receiving tax determining information and for storing tax amount information;

enrolling at least a first merchant associated with said first merchant node with said network taxation system, said first merchant node being located remotely from said network taxation system; and

processing related to at least a first taxable event received from said first merchant node using said network taxation system.

35. A method, as claimed in Claim 34, wherein:

said enrolling step includes obtaining information using said first merchant node related to at least a first address associated with the first merchant and obtaining business rule information related to determining said tax amount information related to said first tax event.

36. A method, as claimed in Claim 34, wherein:

said network taxation system receives said tax amount information from said first merchant node.

37. A method, as claimed in Claim 34, wherein:

said processing step includes determining said tax amount information for said first tax event using one of: said network taxation system and a first computer associated with said first merchant node.

38. A method, as claimed in Claim 34, wherein:

said processing step includes checking an address for the first merchant.

39. A method, as claimed in Claim 34, wherein:

said network taxation system receives said tax amount information and stores said tax determining information.

40. A method, as claimed in Claim 34, wherein:

said tax determining information includes a plurality of the following: price of a purchase, quantity of the purchase, address associated with the purchase, a classification associated with the purchase and merchant business rules.

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